

"Twas Ever Thus!"

By Harry Palmer

**Evenings With Eve**

By Helen Rowland.

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The Mere Man Chats With the Gentle Cynic.

"W"HY don't you get married, Bobby?" inquired the Gentle Cynic, pointing to the loose button, which hung by a single thread from the Mere Man's coat.

"That's what I want to know!" he returned pathetically, as he calmly pulled off the button and threw it away.

"I suppose," sighed the Cynic, stirring her coffee, "that no man knows why he doesn't marry, any more than he knows why he does."

"Perhaps it's because I'm too young, or too particular," suggested the Mere Man.

"Too-WHAT?" exclaimed the Cynic, dropping her spoon with a clatter.

"I can't find anybody good enough for me," explained the Mere Man. "I don't want to waste my young life trying to reform a woman."

The Cynic stared at him from under her picture hat in blank amazement and sought to recover her spoon.

"Think of the way I've been brought up," continued the Mere Man calmly. "Of my boyish hopes, and illusions, my unspoiled nature, my fresh young dreams and longings; and imagine the shock it would be to me to wake up and find myself tied to the average sophisticated, modern young woman, with her worldly ways, her clubs, her flirtations, her bridge whist and—other vices. I tell you, a chap can't be too careful nowadays. I've known many a nice, innocent, trusting, well-bred young fellow, who went unobscuredly into marriage only to find himself wedded to a Suffragette, or a mental scientist, or a bridge fiend, who broke his heart and his pocketbook, with her wild ways and cruel neglect. A man can't tell anything about a woman before he marries her; and most of you girls have collected a lot of bad habits nowadays, distinctly your own, of which we know nothing."

"Well, thank Heaven!" exclaimed the Cynic, recovering her breath at last, "that we've managed to get something distinctly our own, even if it's only a few faults and habits!"

"Time was," went on the Mere Man sorrowfully, "when you were our guardian angel, but that's all over now. In these days, a man has to be his own guardian angel and keep his wife in the straight and narrow path at the same time. Time was when WE had all the privileges and weaknesses and ventral sins and none of the moral responsibilities; when we could be as wild and harum-scarum as we pleased, knowing that as soon as we got married we would reform us and 'settle' us. But nowadays no woman is willing to marry a man to reform him; it's quite out of fashion."

"Yes," retorted the Cynic drily. "We discovered that sacrificing one's life here on earth, for the chance of meeting a man in Heaven, was too much like taking a chance in a raffle. The man with a 'past' as far as his fascination for us is concerned—is a thing of the past."

"Yes!" rejoined the Mere Man bitterly. "It's the woman with a 'future' who holds the centre of the stage nowadays. And if there's one human being on earth harder to live with than a man with a 'past,' it's a woman with a 'future.' Besides, when you did the reforming, you could always go home to 'mother' if it didn't work. We can't! No matter how our lives have been wrecked we've got to go on living with a Suffragette or a clubwoman or—or a Cynic—or else pay her alimony. We've got to go on being gentle and patient and exerting our saintly influence to bring out her better nature and to keep her in the straight and narrow way."

"While you go out and wobble all over the broad and crooked one," put in the Cynic scornfully.

"And even then," went on the Mere Man, ignoring the thrust, "we cannot be sure of making her see the error of her ways, and of winning her back to a sweet home life. For instance, if I should marry YOU!"

"Don't talk of impossibilities, Mr. Cutting," interrupted the Cynic hastily. "Would you give up your club?" persisted the Mere Man.

"Which one, Bobby?" asked the Cynic sweetly.

"And your gambling—at bridge?"

"My—what?"

"And all your other flirtations?"

"How dare you?"

"Would you come home early evenings with no clothes on your back?"

"Wh—what?"

"To hide the ice-cream dots; and no fairy tales about going downtown to 'see a woman.' Would you give up all your bachelor-girl friends of whom I disappeared, and set up and get your own breakfast when the cook was sick, and wear your clothes two seasons?"

"Never!" cried the Cynic desperately. "Do all that—just in order to be MARRIED!" and she shrugged her shoulders expressively.

"Then you see," said the Mere Man, calmly lighting his cigar, "why I don't get married!"

The Day's Good Stories**The Compromise.**

THEY were very young and very happy and very fond and very newly wed. And they lived a blissful life. And they were very young and very happy and very fond and very newly wed. And they lived a blissful life. And they were very young and very happy and very fond and very newly wed. And they lived a blissful life.

A Guilty Conscience.

THAT was a rather unattractive, said Dr. Simon Flexner, the head of the Rockefeller Institute, at a dinner party. "That young man," continued Dr. Flexner, "of whom I have heard so much, is a very young man, and he is very young and very happy and very fond and very newly wed. And they lived a blissful life. And they were very young and very happy and very fond and very newly wed. And they lived a blissful life."

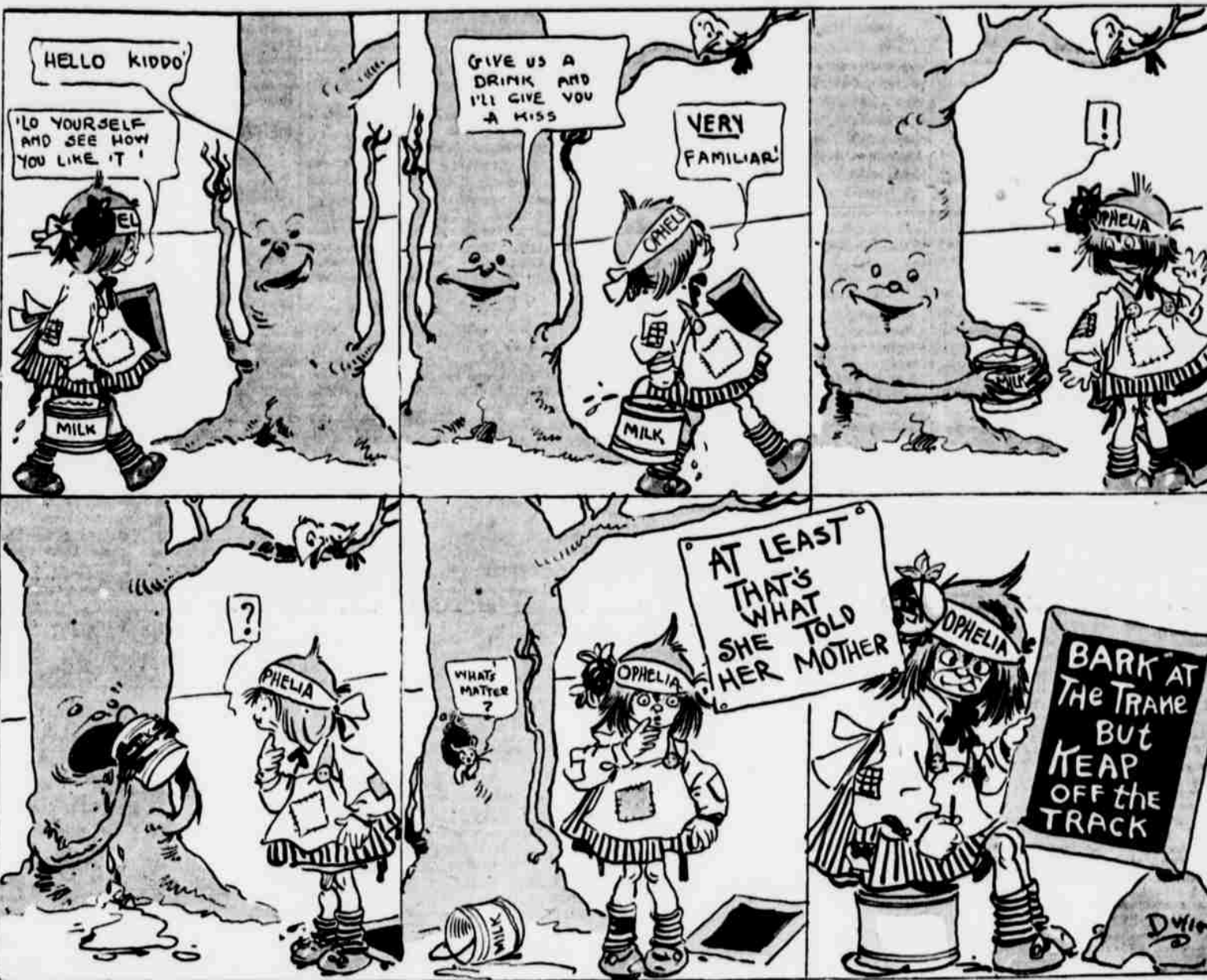
Our School.

By Cora M. W. Greenleaf.

WHAT don't you like your school, little maid, And don't you want to learn? Well, well, dear! I'm almost afraid. Your elders oft spurn The rough path to knowledge, and find Their lessons too hard. For we don't like to broaden our minds, And we think the reward Life gives for the problems we solve, But a poor recompense For the study and toll they involve. The mistakes and suspense. But we each have our lessons to learn, Little girl, you and I, And our Teacher won't seem quite so stern When we're thro'—by and by.

Oh, You Ophelia! By Clare Victor Dwiggin

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**"The Blonde Lady" A New ARSENE LUPIN Story By Maurice Le Blanc**

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SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING INSTALLMENTS.

Prof. Gerbols has a second-hand writing desk as a birthday present for his daughter, Suzanne. A stranger keeps the desk for him, and the desk, offering famous sums for it, Gerbols is forced to sell it. In it is a story book recently bought by Gerbols. The book was a 100,000 franc prize. Not having time to read it, Gerbols gave it to his daughter, Suzanne. But neither she nor Arsené Lupin, the famous thief, who has stolen the desk and now holds the prize, know of its contents. Gerbols is a fair-minded man, but he is a miser. He is a man of great wealth, but he is a miser. He is a man of great wealth, but he is a miser. He is a man of great wealth, but he is a miser.

CHAPTER I.

(Continued.)

Number 514, Series 23.

ARSENE LUPIN closed the door carefully and, quietly unbuckling his gloves, said to the lawyer:

"My dear maitre, I can never thank you sufficiently for your kindness in consenting to defend my rights. I shall not forget it."

Maitre Detinan could only murmur:

"But you never saw me. I did not hear the door."

"Believe me, there are things that have to do with work without ever being heard. I am here all the same, and that is the great thing."

"My daughter! Suzanne! What have you done with her?" repeated the professor.

"Heavens, sir," said Lupin, "what a hurry you're in! Come, calm yourself. Your daughter will be in your arms in a moment."

He walked up and down the room and then, in the tone of a magnate distributing prizes:

"I congratulate you, M. Gerbols, on the skillful way in which you acted just now. If the motor hadn't had that ridiculous accident, we should simply have met at the Hotel and saved Maitre Detinan the annoyance of this visit."

"However, it was destined otherwise."

He caught sight of the two bundles of banknotes and cried:

"Ah, that's right! The million is there!"

"Let us waste no time. . . . Will you allow me?"

"But," said Maitre Detinan, placing

himself in front of the table, "Mlle. Gerbols is not here yet."

"Well, isn't her presence indispensable?"

"I see, I see! Arsené Lupin inspires only a partial confidence. He pockets his half-million, without restoring the hostage. . . . My dear maitre, I am sadly misunderstood! Because fate has obliged me to perform acts of a rather special character, doubts are cast upon my good faith. . . . mine! I, a man, all scruples and delicacy!"

However, my dear maitre, if you're afraid, open your window and call out. There are quite a dozen detectives in the street."

"Do you think so?"

Arsené Lupin raised the blind:

"I doubt if M. Gerbols is capable of throwing Gaimard off the scent. . . . What did I tell you? There he is, the dear old chap!"

"Impossible!" cried the professor. "I swear to you, though."

"That you have not betrayed me. . . . I don't doubt it, but the fellows are clever. Look, there's Polenta!"

"And Gremese!"

"All my best pals, what?"

Maitre Detinan looked at him in surprise. What calmness! He was laughing with a happy laugh, as though he were amusing a child at some child's game, with no danger threatening him. This carelessness did even more than the sight of the detectives to reassure the lawyer. He moved away from the table on which the banknotes lay.

Arsené Lupin took up the two bundles one after the other, counted twenty-five notes from each of them, and handing the lawyer the fifty banknotes thus obtained, said:

"M. Gerbols's share of your fee, my dear maitre, and Arsené Lupin's. We owe you that."

"You owe me nothing," said Maitre Detinan.

"What! After all the trouble we've given you?"

"You forget the pleasure it has been to me to take that trouble."

"You mean to say, my dear maitre, that you refuse to accept anything from Arsené Lupin. That's the worst!"

He held out the 50,000 francs to the professor. "Monsieur, let me give you this in memory of our pleasant meeting—"

will be my wedding present to Mlle. Gerbols."

M. Gerbols snatched at the notes, but protested:

"My daughter is not being married."

"She can't be married if you refuse your consent. But she is dying to be married!"

"What do you know about it?"

"I know that young ladies often cherish dreams without Papa's consent. Fortunately there are good geniuses called Arsené Lupin, who discover the secret of those charming words hidden away in their writing-desks."

"Did you discover nothing else?"

asked Maitre Detinan. "I confess that I am very curious to know why that desk was the object of your attentions."

"Historical reasons, my dear maitre. Although, contrary to M. Gerbols's opinion, it contained no treasure beyond the lottery ticket, of which I did not know, I wanted it and had been looking for it for some time. The desk, which is made of ivory and mahogany, decorated with acanthus-leaf capitals, was found in Marie Walewska's direct little house at Boulogne-sur-Seine, and has an inscription on one of the drawers: 'Dedicated to Napoleon I, Emperor of the French, by his most faithful servant, Manon.' Underneath are three words, carved with the point of a knife: 'Thin, Marie. Napoleon had it copied afterward for the Empress Josephine, so that the writing-desk which people used to admire at the Malmaison and which they still admire at the

Garde-Meuble is only an imperfect copy of the one which now forms part of my collection."

M. Gerbols sighed:

"Oh, dear! If I had only known this at the shop how willingly I would have let you have it!"

Arsené Lupin laughed:

"Yes, and you would, besides, have had the appreciable advantage of keeping the whole of number 614, series 23, for yourself."

"And you would not have thought of kidnapping my daughter, whom all this business must needs have upset?"

"All what business?"

"The abduction. . . ."

"That, my dear sir, you are quite mistaken. Mlle. Gerbols was not abducted."

"My daughter was not abducted?"

"Not at all. Kidnapping, abduction implies violence. Now Mlle. Gerbols acted as a hostage of her own free will."

"Or her own free will!" repeated the professor in confusion.

"And almost at her own request. Why, a quick-witted young lady like Mlle. Gerbols, who, moreover, harbors a secret passion at the bottom of her heart, was hardly likely to refuse the opportunity of securing her dowry. Oh, I assure you it was easy enough to make her understand that there was no other way of overcoming your resistance."

Maitre Detinan was greatly amused. He put in:

"You must have found a difficulty in coming to terms. I can't believe that Mlle. Gerbols allowed you to speak to her."

"I didn't. I have not even the honor of knowing her. A lady of my acquaintance was good enough to undertake the negotiations."

"The blond lady in the motor car, I suppose?"

"Just so. Everything was settled at the first interview near the college. Since then Mlle. Gerbols and her new friends have been abroad. Have visited Belgium and Holland in the most agreeable and instructive manner for a young girl. However, she will tell you everything herself."

"The hall doorbell rang; three rings in quick succession, then a single ring, then another single ring."

"There she is," said Lupin. "My dear maitre, if you would not mind."

"The lawyer ran to open the door. Two young women entered. One of them flung herself into M. Gerbols's arms. The other went up to Lupin. She was tall and shapely, with a very pale face, and her fair hair, which glittered like gold, was parted into two loosely waved bandeaux. Dressed in black, wearing no ornament beyond a five-fold tie necklace, she nevertheless struck a note of elegance and refinement."

Arsené Lupin spoke a few words to her and then, bowing to Mlle. Gerbols, said:

"I must apologise to you, mademoiselle, for all this annoyance. But I hope nevertheless, that you have not been too unhappy."

"Unhappy! I should even have been very happy, if it had not been for my poor father."

"Then all is for the best. Embrace him once more and take the opportunity—you will never have a better of speaking to him about your cousin."

"My cousin? . . . What do you mean?"

"Oh, I think you understand. . . . Your cousin Philippe. . . . the young man whose letters you kept so preciously."

Suzanne blushed, lost confidence, and then, taking Lupin's advance, threw herself once more into her father's arms.

Lupin looked at them both with a

making eye.

"Ah, we are always rewarded for doing good! What a touching sight! Happy father! Happy daughter! And to think that this happiness is your work, Lupin! . . ."

"You later. . . . Your name will be plausibly handed to their children and their children's children. . . ."

"Pammy! She!"

"He turned to the window. . . ."

"Our dear Gaimard there still? . . ."

How he would love to witness this charming display of affection! . . ."

But no, no, no. . . . There is nobody. . . . they're all gone. . . ."

By Jove, the position is growing serious! . . ."

I shouldn't wonder if they were in the gateway by now. . . . or even on the stairs. . . ."

M. Gerbols made an involuntary movement. Now that his daughter was returned to him, he began to see things in their true light. The arrest of his adversary meant half a million to him. Instinctively he took a step toward the door. Lupin barred his way, as though by accident.

"Where are you going, M. Gerbols? To defend me against them? You are too kind! Pray don't trouble. Besides, I assure you they are more perplexed than I. And he continued, reflectively: 'What do they know, when all is said? That you are here. . . . and, perhaps, that Mlle. Gerbols is here, too. For they must have seen her come with an unknown lady. But they have no idea that I am here. How could I have entered a house which they searched this morning from cellar to garret? No, in all probability they are waiting for me to catch me on the wing. . . .'

Unless they have guessed that the unknown lady was sent by me and presume that she has been commissioned to effect the exchange. . . . In that case they are preparing to arrest her when she leaves. . . ."

The bell rang.

Lupin stopped M. Gerbols with an abrupt gesture, and in a harsh and peremptory voice said:

"Stay where you are, sir! Think of your daughter and be reasonable; if not. . . . As for you, Maitre Detinan, I have your word."

(To Be Continued)

The Hedgeville Editor By John L. Hobbie

JUSTICE SPIKE refuses to marry any more couples until he gets an expert opinion on the new gambling law.

A GOOD look at a good-looking is enough to convince any man that the best kind of a girl to marry is one that just looks good.

HECK HENDERSON says that all the bankers do not have the in-

terest of their depositors at heart, but still some of them commit suicide.

FRED DENNIS has passed from among us. The deceased has been married twice, but did not die permanently until last Tuesday.

FRED DEREK tried to make a success of the law business, but he was so honest he couldn't prove anything.

Lupin looked at them both with a